



Immigration Reform Caucus



Memorandum

Congressman Tom Tancredo, Chairman

April 1, 2002

UNBELIEVABLE BUT TRUE IMMIGRATION STORIES

1. 300,000 people who have been ordered deported are still in the country because their deportation orders were not enforced. In many cases, after being ordered deported by a judge, the immigrant simply walked out of the courtroom. Read more at <http://www.humaneventsonline.com/articles/10-22-01/dagostino.html>
2. Fred Alexander, a deputy district director for the Immigration and Naturalization Service publicly told a group of "undocumented" day laborers that "It's not a crime to be in the U.S. illegally, it's a violation of civil law."
3. The Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General did not find any evidence that the INS is capable of locating visa violators still in the country. See 11/7/01 Washington Times page A6.
4. The INS had Mohammed Atta in custody because he tried to enter the U.S. on an improper visa, but let him go anyway. Read more at <http://www.newtimesbpb.com/issues/2001-10-18/feature.html>
5. The Greyhound bus attacker was on a 30 day visa that had expired 2 years ago.
6. Until passage of the PATRIOT act, political ideology was not grounds for deportation or inadmissibility. The language in the PATRIOT act alone may not even go far enough to fix this problem, though. Court cases have extended the First Amendment outside the country to the point that consular officials do not have the authority to stop someone who makes threatening statements from obtaining a visa. Read more at <http://humaneventsonline.com/articles/10-08-01/barnett.html>
7. The INS spent \$31.2 million on a computer system to track whether visaholders overstay their visas. The system still does not work, and the INS says that it needs an additional \$57 million for the system.
8. According to several universities, the INS routinely takes 6 mos. to respond to notifications from their registrars that foreign students are not attending classes.
9. One of the 1993 World Trade Center bombers was given legal status in the 1986 amnesty.
10. Each of the 19 hijackers had Social Security numbers, which they obtained legally. See 11/2/01 Chicago Tribune, page 4.
11. Former Clinton INS commissioner Doris Meissner says that the amnesty program that President Fox of Mexico is pushing could make 27 million people eligible to move to the U.S. Read more at <http://www.thenewsmexico.com/noticia.asp?id=17695>
12. According to the non-partisan Center for Immigration Studies (<http://www.cis.org>), "In a newly released report, the Census Bureau estimated that perhaps 115,000 people from Middle Eastern countries live in the United States illegally."
13. The INS brought a psychologist to its Newark, NJ office to try to resolve problems in the "dysfunctional" office that employees nearly unanimously declared "poorly led" and "very unhealthy." Employees described the office's climate of "conspiracy and secrecy," and believed that awards and promotions were based on favoritism, not job performance. Read more at <http://www.bergen.com/news/insreport200201013.htm>
14. Border Patrol agents at the Juarez/El Paso border sometimes ask border crossers to step through the "drug sniffing door," which is simply a wooden door frame on wheels.
15. In October and November 2001, 7,000 visas were issued to men from countries in which Al-Qaeda is known to be active. Read more at: <http://www.humaneventsonline.com/articles/12-17-01/dagostino.html>
16. From the founding of our nation until about 1965, the average annual number of immigrants and refugees to the United States was about 200,000 people. Since 1990, this number has been running at about *one million* people each year – and that does not include the annual population gain from illegal aliens.
17. There are a total of 4 political appointees at the INS.
18. Through the diversity visa program, the U.S. encourages people from each of the seven countries on the State Department terrorist watch list to apply for visas to come to the U.S. Read more at <http://www.humaneventsonline.com/articles/10-01-01/dagostino.html>



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19. Four states – Utah, Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee – have a policy of issuing drivers' licenses to illegal immigrants with no questions asked. Read how at least five of the hijackers used their Virginia licenses to remain in the U.S. undetected: <http://www.humaneventsonline.com/articles/11-05-01/cover.html>
20. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg had openly declared that he will not enforce U.S. immigration laws. "...those people who are undocumented do not have to worry about the city government..." Read more at: <http://www.newsmax.com/showinsidecover.shtml?a=2001/11/19/151620>
21. Saudi Arabians wishing to travel to the U.S. are typically not interviewed by the State Department. They can obtain visas through travel agents or "drop boxes" near the U.S. Consulates in the country. 15 of the 19 hijackers obtained their visas in Saudi Arabia. Read more at: <http://www.washingtonpostcom/wp-dyn/articles/A14788-2001Oct30.html>
22. The INS has a processing backlog of approximately 4.5 million immigration applications.
23. State Department form DS-156 – the official nonimmigrant visa application – asks the following question: "Do you seek to enter the U.S. to engage in export control violations, subversive or terrorist activities, or any other unlawful purpose? Are you a member of a terrorist organization as currently designated by the U.S. Secretary of State?" The footnote to the question states that "A YES answer does not automatically signify ineligibility for a visa." Read the application at <http://travel.state.gov/DS-0156.pdf>
24. Studies estimate there are approximately 350,000 people who have become illegal immigrants by overstaying their visas. Because of its failure to implement an entry-exit system as required by a 1996 law, the INS has no way to identify or locate them.
25. Since September 11th, no action has been taken to tighten up the "visa waiver" program – a program that permits people from 29 countries to enter the U.S. without a visa or an interview.
26. The GAO found that the INS wastes around \$100 million per year by not efficiently managing the deportation of criminal immigrants.
27. The renewal of Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality act in 2001 legalized approximately 900,000 illegal immigrants in just four months.
28. 91% of the respondents to an October 2001 CNN.com "quick vote" poll responded that "the U.S. should tighten immigration laws."
29. New INS field officers quickly learn an unofficial creed: "Big cases, big problems. Small cases, small problems. NO cases, NO problems." This claim, made by an INS whistleblower who testified before the Congressional Immigration Caucus, has been confirmed by several other INS agents who have contacted Rep. Tancredo to assure him that it is true.
30. INS whistleblowers have come to live by another widely understood maxim: "You shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free... to look for another job."
31. Immigrants who are detained on deportable offenses are often released with a summons to appear at a deportation hearing at some point in the future. The summons has become sarcastically known as a "run letter," because it simply prompts the criminal alien to run from the law and disappear back into the community undetected. See 1/14/02 Buffalo News, page B4.
32. Fraud within the H-1B (high-tech) non-immigrant visa system has become so rampant that an entire industry of "body shops" has sprung up in America. The body shops sponsor foreign workers' visas and then place them in jobs with American companies, typically working for a significantly lower wage than American high-tech workers.
33. The best place to buy fake documents in order to get into the U.S. from Mexico – just blocks away from the border crossing in Juarez. The best person to ask for help in getting them – the Mexican official guarding the gate! U.S. Representative Tom Tancredo recently asked a Mexican official at the border crossing how to get phony papers, and was given directions and advice about how much he should pay for them.
34. Between 1993 and 2002, Congress roughly quadrupled INS' operating budget. A recent GovExec.com piece wrote that despite this, INS has a "range and depth of management problems, including poor financial reporting,



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- incorrect records management ... poor personnel management, and inadequate capital planning." Read more at <http://www.govexec.com/gpp/0299ins.htm>
35. Companies who are laying off H-1B visaholders frequently inform the INS that the person's status has changed to "unpaid leave" rather than "unemployed." The H-1B worker is then free to search for another job indefinitely (and compete with American workers in the high-tech job market) without fear of deportation.
 36. A teenager was arrested in California for stealing an elderly woman's purse and breaking her arm. He told the police he was in the country illegally and wasn't carrying any identification. An immigration judge ordered him deported. Once across the border, he picked up the phone and asked his mom to drive down with his U.S. passport so that he – a U.S. citizen – could re-enter the country, having successfully gotten away with a felony.
 37. Just two weeks after September 11th, Clinton INS Commissioner Doris Meissner said at a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace forum that tracking down people who overstay their visas (as most of the hijackers did) has been "a very, very low priority, and I think it should be a low priority." To read more, see <http://www.jsonline.com/news/attack/sep01/immig25092401.asp>
 38. During the summer of 2001, the Mexican government distributed "survival kits" to Mexicans near the border containing granola bars, water, first aid supplies, and condoms – presumably to make their upcoming (illegal) journeys into America easier. This story was widely reported, but see the 7/8/01 edition of the Baltimore Sun, page 1C
 39. The INS used a motel room in Durango, Colorado to detain a group of illegal immigrants from Central America after their arrest. The room was left unguarded overnight, and the illegal immigrants "escaped" through the windows. See 5/20/01 Denver Post, page A1
 40. The H-1B program (for high-tech temporary work) admits about 500 "fashion models" visas for employment in the U.S. every year.
 41. Walter Cadman, the former INS District Director in Florida was caught deceiving Congressional investigators looking into the functioning of the INS and then lead a coverup. The Justice Department investigated the scandal – "Kromegate" – and recommended that Cadman be fired for hiding evidence that the facilities he oversaw were grossly mismanaged. Cadman was briefly demoted and a year later, in 1998, was promoted to the head of the INS National Security Unit. Read the entire story at: <http://www.newtimesbpd.com/issues/2001-11-01/news.html>
 42. Confusion as to the true point at which the U.S. ends and Mexico begins has grown to the point that on March 14th, 2000, a Mexican Army unit crossed the U.S. border, mistakenly chased U.S. Border Patrol Agents and shot at them. Read the entire story at http://www.ranchrescue.com/news_articles/fox_mexican_army.htm
 43. Juan Hernandez, head of the government's Office of Mexicans Living Outside Mexico, told U.S. Representative Tom Tancredo that the North American southwest "is not two countries; it's just a region."
 44. In Houston, after September 11th, an INS task force was established to help search for some of the most dangerous immigrant fugitives in the region. The more than 20 officers were expected complete their task with between two and four cars. One officer, who was forced to remain at his desk due to a lack of transportation said, "There are thousands of [fugitive] files, and we're pushing paper." See the 1/11/02 Houston Chronicle page A1.
 45. Between six and eight million people living in America are dual-citizens – implying that they share their political and ideological loyalty between America and some other country. A series of court decisions dating back to 1980 have weakened expatriation laws to the point that being elected to office in another country or serving as a high ranking officer in a foreign military are not sufficient grounds for losing U.S. citizenship. A report on the implications of this can be found at <http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/renshontoc.html>
 46. Illegal immigrants who enroll in the University of California system are charged in-state tuition.
 47. Speaking to a gathering in Milwaukee in July of 2001, President Vicente Fox of declared that "Mexico extends beyond its borders."



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48. INS Commissioner James Ziglar's only law enforcement experience is serving as the Sergeant-at-Arms for the Senate.
49. Although the law says that H-1B visaholders must leave the country immediately after being laid off or fired, the INS has told them that no one will be forced to leave, and to keep looking for new jobs.
50. A movement to reclaim "Aztlán" has begun in America's west. Sometimes known as the "reconquista" movement, its aim is (evidently) to retake the southwest back from the U.S. government. Its leaders declare that "political-economic power, which respects only money and force is our fundamental enemy and the name of this power is 'colonization' and Capitalism is its principal weapon." Read more online at <http://www.barriowarriors.net>
51. 63% of INS managers responding to a 1997 GAO survey, said that unclear lines of accountability were a problem at the INS to a moderate or great extent. Read more online at <http://www.gao.gov/archive/1997/gg97132.pdf>.
52. In 1990, Congress created "temporary protected status" (TPS) – a status under which people from countries experiencing a natural disaster or civil war could come to the U.S. temporarily. The true beneficiaries of this status are usually illegal immigrants. When Congress passed the 1990 law, it specified that persons from El Salvador would be the first beneficiaries. Most of the people from El Salvador who applied for TPS, however, were already in the country illegally and simply "adjusted their status." The net result was a widespread amnesty for Salvadorans living in America illegally. Read more about TPS abuse at <http://www.cis.org/articles/1999/Backgrounder899/back899.html> and <http://www.fairus.org/html/04173911.htm>
53. What is INS' policy toward illegal immigrants in the U.S.? According to INS manager Nina Moniz "Our job is to explain to people why they are here illegally, help them change that and help them to get benefits." -7/23/2001 Interview on Denver's KOA radio
54. Six months after September 11th, INS mailed a letter to the flight school in Florida informing them that two of the hijackers (including ringleader Mohammed Atta) had been approved for student visas. Despite the president's "outrage" at the incident, to date INS' only response has been to reassign four career INS employees.
55. The town of San Luis, Arizona has around 3,000 residents but 20,000 post office boxes. The reason? So that Mexican citizens living just across the border can come to the U.S. to collect the public benefits (welfare checks) every month that they signed up for using their P.O. Box as their "permanent" address in the U.S.

Do you have an unbelievable story or fact to report? Report it anonymously to Tom.Tancredo@mail.house.gov

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